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ABSTRACT

Although a writer ideally may wish "to help man endure by lifting his heart," paradoxically his immediate concerns must focus on the technical problems of his craft. The compulsion to write and the creative process itself are difficult to analyze. The gifted writer takes all experience to himself and imaginatively transforms the real world into his own private world. His only ethic is to be true to his own intense perspective of reality and to the artistic demands of each work's particular form. Because subject, form, and expression inextricably affect each other, the writer must have a conceptual sense of the whole as he writes, with provision for his characters to develop freely. Then, when the work is complete, he must become a rigorous self critic. His only enduring reward will be that, as he deals candidly with the joys, triumphs, and hurts of life, he will exorcise old ghosts and open up new creative vistas for himself. (JB)

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PARADOXES OF PRIVILEGE: The Humanistic Act of Writing

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The legal and medical professions enjoy and jealously guard the right of privileged communication between doctor and patient, lawyer and client; what passes between them is not subject to revelation and is inadmissible in court. Between writer and reader there exists another kind of privileged communication, although these two are utterly shameless——they try to talk about it all the time.

The real nature of the writer's and the reader's activity is incommunicable. Both can talk around the raw experience of the communication, but they cannot convey its essential nature. Watching one man write and another read provides scant information about either writing or reading, and the subjective report is not much better. But although the privileged communication between writer and reader takes place in inviolable privacy, it is possible to speak of the writer's sense of his side of the transaction. There is an immense lore of the writer's craft.

For William Faulkner the ultimate privilege of the writer is "to help man endure by lifting his heart," a noble aim. It is by definition a humanistic activity which at once excludes concern with reporting and publicity, textbooks and cookbooks, and which confines discussion to imaginative, emotive writing —what is vaguely termed "creative writing," or better, "the literature of power." Paradoxically, when he is at work the writer who may help man endure by lifting his heart seldom thinks of his privilege and concerns himself rather with the problems of his craft. Essential aspects of his struggle, like the raw nature of his communication, are as impossible to convey as his experience of the color blue. Nevertheless, the act of writing has been a perennial subject with those who write, and a partial understanding is possible.

A working definition of literature may be helpful, though much imaginative writing cannot be dignified as literature in the general use of the term. Literature is whatever reveals in words a unique reaction to experience in which a writer symbolizes an emotionally coherent reality in any of a variety of forms. Faulkner put it succinctly from the point of view of the craftsman of letters when he said that it is the writer's task "to create out of the materials of the human spirit something which did not exist before." The term "literature" generally trails connotations of permanence and worth, but useful discussion must consider a range of art which includes the irony of Dorothy Parker's verse as well as the moving simplicity of "The Lord is my Shepherd"; the slightness of *Bonjour Tristesse* and the massiveness of *War and Peace;* the revulsion of Celine's *Death on the Installment Plan* as well as the affirmation of Willa Cather's *My Antonia.*

Henry James praised certain works as being so rich that they provide the reader with a "supplementary experience of life"; how much more rich must be the experience of the writer who creates the work. It can be shown, for example, that Balzac quite literally lived in his work and that when he went into society he carried the latest gossip of his characters as being more real and interesting

than the affairs of the people around him. He lived more richly in his subjective than in his objective world, as do all writers when they are at work, and he was unwilling to leave it even when he went abroad.

Everyone experiences objective and subjective worlds, a physical actuality outside himself and an individual "reality" within. The "reality" of either world is sometimes more, sometimes less present to him. However derived from and dependent upon some relation with the actual world, the subjective inward world—the world of the writer's imagination—is the realm of creative writing. Scholarship, which interests itself in the details surrounding a work of art, often attempts to trace the writer's borrowings from actuality and at times penetrates to the writer's subjective world itself through such a brilliant study as John Livingstone Lowe's *The Road to Xanadu*. But the inward world is known most often only by report from its sole inhabitant.

Think of a piece of paper on which is drawn a circle as big as a saucer. By analogy with the schematization which allows reduction of the solar system to a page, let this circle circumscribe the public subjects possible to the writer: the circuit of objective human experience. On the circumference of the circle now place smaller circles, none of which is entirely inside or outside the large circle. These circles will represent the extent to which various writers have dealt with objective experience: large circles for Shakespeare, or Balzac, or Dickens; small circles even for some acknowledged masters like Hawthorne or Jane Austen. The interest of this simple diagram does not lie in a contest of size, but rather in the insistence that all the circles fall partly within, partly without the large circumference. There is a public and a private subject matter, and if Balzac set out to rival the complexity of all levels of civil life and so falls mostly within the larger circle, Poe in his subjectivity is almost entirely outside it. Each of the smaller circles represents the created world of the writer as it is discoverable in his work, and it is never entirely the actual, objective world. It includes and is founded upon actualities, but it is a work of imagination also and is not entirely the real thing. Paradoxically, it often illuminates reality.

The writer creates through his work a private world more or less corresponding to the actual world and to what Henry James termed "our general sense of the way things happen." Or perhaps "creates" is too pretentious a word and it is more truthful to say that the writer uses his unique and personal experience without having created anything until he shapes his report to the form of the poem, the story, the novel, or the play; his world is given him by experience and reflection and he creates only his work.

It is not to the purpose to discuss the characteristics of changing literary periods—the neo-classical age, for example, or the romantic period; nor is it necessary to distinguish the modes of realism and naturalism, allegory and symbolism, or whatever. The writer, whatever his date, works within the state of the art of his time, and if he develops anything new in technique he goes on from there. Among other forces, what Whitehead termed "the climate of opinion" of his age will affect him, even in matters of technique; and over that climate he has no control, though he may prove later to have given aspects of it their definitive statement. Thus every age is creative on its own terms, and the writer, even consciously in revolt, largely accepts those terms without awareness of any concession.

Why should anyone write at all? What is the nature of the compulsion? There is sometimes the longing to save something, as when John Updike wrote of his grandmother to keep her memory safe from the wave of oblivion. There

is the longing to express intensity of experience, such intensity being the quality which James prized above all others. There is James Baldwin's sense that writing is an act of love, and that to write in these times is a positive act. But writing is also discovery. When the interviewers from the *Paris Review* asked whether he foresaw the outcome of a novel before he commenced writing, Georges Simenon said he preferred not to, for if he did the writing would not be interesting. Robert Frost spoke rather of discovering "the things you didn't know you knew." He spoke also of the lump in the throat that ends in wisdom as feeling finds its expression.

Reading does not necessarily make anyone wise; it may merely make the reader learned. Writing almost necessarily makes the writer wise, if only about the truths of his own nature. Thomas Wolfe spoke of a conviction that "a man must use the material and experience of his own life if he is to create anything that has substantial value." Granted; but what he makes of the material and experience of his own life helps define the nature of creativity and the creative experience. For as Alfred Kazin points out, "The true writer starts from autobiography, but he does not end there, and it is not himself he is interested in, but the use he can make of self as a literary creation." Whether the writer deliberately starts with himself or not he most frequently creates a persona rather than expose himself as he might be recognized by his friends. There is evidence of this in Emily Dickinson's protesting that the "I" of her poems was "Not I, but a supposed person." There is contributory evidence in the very differing personae behind Carson McCullers' *Reflections in a Golden Eye*, the product of cold revulsion in a persona lacking sympathy, and the warmly compassionate persona which one feels behind *The Member of the Wedding*. There is, too, the account of Julian Hawthorne's unwillingness to believe, when he first read his father's novels, that his father could have written them; in the auctorial persona behind *The Scarlet Letter* and the others he could not recognize the gentle parent he knew.

So perhaps it may be truer to say that the writer reveals not only a split but a multiple personality and that he is all his characters. When the critics were at a loss to understand Balzac's powerful creation of the awful Valerie Marneffe of *Cousin Bette*, Hippolyte Taine set them straight: "Balzac loves his Valerie." Shakespeare certainly loved his villains to be able to do them so well. In short, the writer may—usually must—be all of his characters, but despite this a unique personality emerges. Whether it closely resembles the man known in the actual world is another matter.

So far as observation of the real world goes, a novelist, for example, may be far more concerned with the feeling of places and situations than with details; his observation is generally unsystematized unless, in the fashion of naturalists such as Zola, he chooses to study up his subject in terms of details in the faith that if he gets his facts right the feeling will take care of itself, a dangerous assumption. Henry James illustrates an approach the opposite of Zola's. In another of the family's aberrant attempts to get him educated he was sent to the Harvard Law School. There James observed his lecturers and caught the atmosphere of the lecture hall so well that when writing his autobiography forty years later he could make the personalities and the place come to vivid life; but he was utterly blank at the time and later about anything his teachers said.

A good deal is made of the virtue of integrity in the writer, and in truth it is the sole virtue which counts. But it is truth to feeling and to the demands of his form. It has nothing to do with law or morals and often exists preeminently

in artists who outrage the consciences of their times by their extremes of conduct. A forceful statement is Deems Taylor's "The Monster," in which he catalogs the shortcomings of Richard Wagner and concludes bluntly that none of them matter; all that matters is the music. The writer's or any artist's integrity is not a social but an artistic virtue.

It shows forth in his creativity, aspects of which must now be considered. The creative process is complex, and it proceeds sometimes by leaps and short-circuits. Dissection does it violence. For analogy, think of an anatomist's account of the musculature, a physicist's analysis of forces, and a coach's discussion of strokes compared with the grace of the swimmer in motion whom one sees. Various descriptions have been given of the shaping role of the writer, and all of them do some violence to reality. Stendhal's description of the novel as a mirror dawdling down a roadway implies a kind of witless reflector of actualities, but the writer is more than that. Isherwood's title, *I Am a Camera*, implies that the writer may choose to vary his direction of vision, even possibly his focus, but that he registers everything within his range; and that is simply not true. Henry James does somewhat better when he describes the house of fiction as an immense building of many windows opening on a vast plain. The spreading field is the subject, and the different placement of each window suggests the peculiar angle of the artist's vision; but crucial to James's description is the pair of eyes at each of the windows, along with his insistence that the consciousness of the artist determines both what he is capable of seeing and what he can make of it.

A paradox arises in the fact that some impressively good writing has no discoverable basis in experience, despite the injunction to writers to write what they know. The prime example is Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, a novel of warfare which Crane wrote before he had ever heard a shot fired in anger. The paradox is resolved by consideration of the nature of experience for the writer. Eckerman asked Goethe in his old age how he could possibly, in youth, have written with the mature understanding shown in the early work. The poet replied that he could have had "knowledge of manifold human circumstances only in anticipation." Similarly, Henry James counseled young writers to be "persons on whom nothing is lost." By a kind of extrapolation from the ordinary occurrences of life the gifted imagination "experiences" more than most observers of great events.

Further, the gifted imagination takes everything to itself and uses it. Virginia Woolf observed that "Everything is the proper stuff of fiction, every feeling, every thought, every quality of brain and spirit is drawn upon; no perception comes amiss." Again, Henry James, in his Preface to *The Princess Casamassima*, illustrates simultaneously the peculiar nature of "experience" or "knowledge" for the writer as well as his use of it to write what he knows when, like Stephen Crane, he simply does not "know" in the ordinary sense of the term. James defended his lack of specific and factual knowledge of the anarchist movement he dealt with. The novel, he said, grew directly out of the long walks he took in London during his first year of residence there, when he felt a "mystic solicitation . . . on the part of everything, to be interpreted and . . . reproduced." He conceived the effect these appearances might have on a young man who would have derived his education from them, and the figure of Hyacinth Robinson sprang up for him "out of the London pavement." He then developed a plot which brought Robinson into the activities of an anarchist group, and finally had to ask himself whether his information was enough, whether it was authentic. "There was always of course the chance that the propriety might be challenged—challenged by readers of a knowledge greater than mine. Yet knowledge, after

all, of what? My vision of the aspects I more or less fortunately rendered *was*, exactly, my knowledge. If I made my appearances live, what was this but the utmost one could do with them?" In short, James had the feeling of his subject, and he could make do with scant documentary detail. On the other hand, no amount of documentation will make a work come to life unless the writer discovers the feeling which will give him his emphasis. The best recent case history of how this discovery comes upon a writer is by Mark Harris in *Mark the Glove Boy*. Harris was writing an article, but he worked as a novelist.

It is all very well to insist that the writer largely deals with a subjective world, or, as James put it, the actual world as seen by the unique eyes of an intelligent perceiver at his private window. Difficulties at once arise, for one naturally asks why a writer chooses to deal with one subject and not another, in one form in preference to others, in a mode which, like the stream of consciousness technique when Joyce used it in *Ulysses*, may baffle his readers. By an arbitrary separation which is useful only for discussion, ideas, form, and expression may be considered apart from one another. In practice, from the moment of conception, consideration of any of them affects each of the others, and this interaction continues right through revisions made in page proof.

Where do ideas come from? The best short answer is that they come from all over. Unsystematized observation is a great source of the germ or "the virus of suggestion" of which writers speak. There is even a virtue in being indiscriminately open to suggestion. The recapture of experience which can now be fitted into a perspective is another prime source, which with Marcel Proust led to the fixing of a whole era. Introspection will serve, as when Walt Whitman's muse advised him that since he contained enough he ought to let some of it out. The great example of the rehandling of a subject may be found in the three Isaiahs, where the successive writers treat first debasement, then forgiveness, and at last triumph for the chosen, each of the last two building upon the vision of his predecessor. This is rather different from the reconsiderations of the same material, as in the *Electras* of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, where each of the poets makes a coherent play out of differing conceptions of character and motivation. There are even possibilities in the simultaneous handling of opposed themes, as when Goethe in his two life works developed the characters of Faust and Wilhelm Meister, probably from the divisions of his own nature, and arrived at a wisdom for each which negates the wisdom of the other. Or there are simply, as Simenon puts it, "ideas that worry you," and which in this prolific author's work have led to successive rehandlings of the same subject. The surprising thing, no matter what the course of development may be, is how little it takes to spark the creative imagination. Writers of experience instinctively take only what sets the imagination to work and are deaf and blind to details and particulars when actuality gets in the way of their sense of the subject.

By ideas one does not mean either concepts or conceptual thinking, both of which are dangerous for fiction until they are so thoroughly assimilated into character and action that they are objectified rather than discussed. One thinks of Eliot's notion of the objective correlative for poetry, that device whereby emotion is conveyed but never, as emotion, spoken of. James understood this and made the principle explicit when, in praising Turgenev, he pointed out that Turgenev never dealt with ideas except as they were embodied in his characters.

The question at once arises how far the conscious development of a fictional subject can go when it is the universal experience that a frequently far more valuable unconscious development goes on as well. It depends on the author and

the subject, and it varies from piece to piece, but generally the author assumes control of his choice of viewpoint; he is likely to decide upon and control the time sequence of his action; he chooses deliberately to use first or third person narration and to impose restrictions on his mode of perception; he is generally in conscious control of his selection of narration or dramatization for particular scenes and sequences. In short, he is likely to be aware of choice in terms of form and treatment, with attendant and simultaneous effect upon the subject he is to deal with. "Choice" in this context can refer simply to so powerful a feeling of the rightness of one approach that no alternative presents itself.

But this as yet says nothing much about the shaping of the subject as a subject, except insofar as enlargement or restriction of the subject is implicit in, say, the choice of a short form over a longer form. How far the conscious preparation for a novel may go is an individual matter. Henry James wrote a synopsis for *The Ambassadors* which is several thousand words long; Anthony Trollope began *Framley Parsonage* two days after completing another novel, allowing one day for rest and the second for compiling a list of the characters he intended to use in the new work; Dickens' notebook entries for *David Copperfield* are jottings which indicate dramatic divisions, chapters, and sometimes snatches of dialogue. For many writers there is a quiescent or gestatory period during which a subject which has been examined and considered must be allowed to sink into what James termed "the great crucible or stewpot of the imagination," where it develops a life of its own and from which it emerges changed, enriched in ways which no amount of conscious effort will bring about. When it will so emerge is beyond the writer's prediction; it may take years or days.

A subject has now taken shape and substance from conscious and unconscious development. Form and subject are inseparable. Each implies and affects the other, and their developments are simultaneous, but for discussion they can be separated. How does the artist achieve the form which in the best work seems to have an inevitable rightness? At some point a conceptual grasp of the whole structure must be achieved, for without this there is no determining the relevance of the parts and the suitability of the tone. This may come as a moment of clarity when the parts fall into place, but it appears that for some writers both form and substance are discovered during the writing itself, which at least for Robert Penn Warren is a process of self-discovery as well. "When you start any book you don't know what, ultimately, your issues are. You try to write to find them . . . you have to write from the inside not the outside—the inside of yourself. You have to find what's there. You can't predict it—just dredge for it and hope you have something worth the dredging."

This is almost like the predicament of the wise woman who had to protest, when asked what she thought about something, "How do I know what I think till I see what I say? For as Gertrude Stein advised John Hyde Preston, there must be, for some writers at least, not too much thought. She exhorted him to ". . . write without thinking of the result in terms of a result, but think of the writing in terms of discovery, which is to say that creation must take place between the pen and the paper, not before in a thought or afterwards in a recasting. Yes, before in a thought, but not in careful thinking. It will come if it is there and if you will let it come, and if you have anything you will get a sudden creative recognition." Mari Sandoz used to write her first drafts in six weeks, partly to find out what she was writing about, and then spend the rest of a year doing what she called "really writing the book."

There is no predictable point at which the essential grasp of form may come,

nor is there a firm realization of the material until it has found its expression. This is a reminder that all description of stages of development is misleading, since simultaneous developments occur, and the unconscious provides the conscious mind with what seem like short-circuit flashes of insight in which the process of development can never be grasped or explained. It is well, also, to remember that feeling is more important than thought to much of the writing process, and that for the fiction writer this often takes the form of identification with all his characters. The example of Balzac with his terrible Valerie Marneffe has been mentioned. There is more recent evidence from Katherine Anne Porter, who in an interview after the publication of *Ship of Fools* said, ". . . I'm all of the women and I'm the Captain on the bridge and I'm the fat man in the pink shirt who sang and I'm the sea-sick bulldog. I'm even those children, those horrible children, and I'm all the sailors and I'm the man who got drowned . . . . Sometimes I think I am the ship on the sea because they all took place in my life, my imagination. After all, in a strange kind of way, I made them up." There is other evidence, but the consensus holds that in the writing of fiction the novel or the story must be grasped in terms of feeling and that one way of grasping is to identify with all the characters.

One hears a good deal about symbolism these days; there is much scholarly analysis, to sometimes strangely contradictory conclusions. The discussion is largely unprofitable for the writer. True, there is conscious use of symbols, and it sometimes is very effective when it is not forced. Mary McCarthy tells the hilarious story of having a student writer refuse to submit a piece for publication until she had had a chance to insert the symbols which her English teacher had told her ought to be there. Unfortunately there are people to whom the anecdote is not funny, but the truth is that effective symbolism comes unforced or not at all, and self-conscious symbolism is worse than none. Similarly, if style is the man the writer's effective grasp of his characters, his form, and the feeling which he wishes to convey will sufficiently take care of the stylistic aspects of his expression during the first, non-critical stage of his writing.

Something has been said of writing as self-discovery, and one hears a good deal about writing as a means of self-expression. The young seek to discover themselves, though in rather different fashion from the mature artist's probing toward what Frost termed discovery of "the things you did't know you knew"; and literary ladies, especially those who don't write very much, pine for self-expression. A difficulty with terms arises, and it leads to another paradox of the writer's creative experience: the self-discovery and the self-expression alike proceed by indirection. Simenon acknowledges that if a man has the urge to be an artist it is because he needs to find himself, but he goes on to point out that this discovery is not the result of self-scrutiny, for "Every writer tries to find himself through his characters, through all his writing." The self-expression also comes about through the handling of subject matter which has great personal value but which is not likely to be concerned with the self as such. Discussing the poetic subjects of Marianne Moore, T. S. Eliot pointed out that "We all have to choose whatever subject-matter allows us the most powerful and most secret release; and that is a personal affair." The paradox resolves itself in the realization that self-discovery and self-expression alike are possible through unconcern with one-self and for the fiction writer come of his living through his characters. A qualified exception may be made for Thomas Wolfe, though it can be shown that a great deal of Eugene Gant and Monk Webber was not Thomas Wolfe. The keeping of a journal such as Andre Gide's or the writing of autobiography in the fashion of Henry Miller is another matter. Finally, as with symbolism, the self-

discovery and self-expression which have nothing to do with self-scrutiny will sufficiently take care of the problem of theme and the pattern of meaning, including the archetypal patterns which are the subject of contemporary criticism. Theme is ultimately the truth of experience as the writer has grasped it, the way he feels about his characters, the outcomes he discovers or contrives for them in keeping with his "general sense of the way things happen." This cannot be forced, although it may change, or may, as with Goethe, admit alternatives entertained throughout a creative lifetime. When the attempt is made to force a pattern on the material the results can range from the triumphant dead-end of Joyce's *Ulysses* to the awkward self-consciousness of Frederick Buechner's *A Long Day's Dying*. The truth of the proposition that the archetypal patterns, like theme, will take care of themselves because the root of the matter is not in the pattern but in the writer is shown in the example of Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. Professor Elizabeth Kerr's brilliant analysis of this novel in the light of Northrop Frye's categories shows that the work exemplifies in all its details the Myth of Summer of Frye's analysis. Unless one is willing to assume that by clairvoyance Faulkner anticipated the scholarship of Professor Frye and set about demonstrating it ahead of its publication one is left with the conclusion that Faulkner treated his subject as it conformed to his artist's sense and that the root of the matter was in him, whatever his degree of awareness.

This opens the general subject of originality. There are no new plots. Such studies as Georges Polti's *The Thirty-Six Dramatic Situations* pretend to catalog to exhaustion the limited possibilities of dramatic conflict. The hunting of analogues is a profitable pursuit for scholars; it results in publication, though at the same time it prompts the wearying sense that everything has been done before in one fashion or another. In truth it has, from some angle of vision at one of those windows of the house of fiction. The only possible originality lies in the writer's handling of his material, the essential element of which is his truthfulness in reporting the world from his own window. Imitativeness is suicide, for one simply cannot, in the terms of James's analogy, look from another's window or with another's eyes, and imitativeness confines itself to the tricks and peculiarities which make imitation Hemingway so awful and imitation James so dull. In practice, of course, there is never simply a report of the world from one's window; the imagination is as much the organ of vision as the eyesight. So to the writer the actual and the fictional worlds are at times confused, with the fictional world often far more real than the commonplace actuality around him. Startled out of his "real" world by the ring of the phone or the knock at the door, the writer is likely to stare about him with the vacuous uncertainty of the village idiot.

When he returns to his own world unprompted, on the completion of his first work, another essential side of his nature must appear. He must become a ferocious self-critic, for nothing less than ferocity toward his own labors will serve. At Stanford one year the brutal cry, "Kill your babies!" was everywhere heard among the creative writers. What was meant that the lovely excrescences must be lopped off, the pretty phrases butchered, the lyrical passages choked to death. It is the only safe tactic. If the writer is aware that such and such a turn of expression, or elegant sentence, or expressive paragraph is exceptionally good, it must be cut or it will jar upon the reader, like a giggle in the midst of a sermon. Simenon puts the principle in workmanlike fashion. "You know, you have a beautiful sentence—cut it. Every time I find such a thing in one of my novels it is to be cut." The cutting, by common consent, is best done after a period of cooling off, when the creative tension has relaxed and the knife can be wielded with precision.

Another paradox of the creative experience attends the completion of revision and rewriting: the achievement is a defeat. As someone has pointed out, works of art are not completed, they are abandoned. Unless the writer has perfected a routine much like a vaudeville act which can be played again and again, every attempt is a new beginning for which he is unprepared and for which he has to discover his method as he goes along. In the end nothing he does is so good as the work he tried to do. Even his words break under the tension, as Eliot pointed out, and he fights with shabby equipment which is always deteriorating. One result, whatever the arrogance of the man, is the humility of the artist, as when Spender confesses, "All one can do is to achieve nakedness, to be what one is with all one's faculties and perceptions, strengthened by all the skill which one can acquire, and then to stand before the judgment of time." It has already been pointed out that the writer is "Not I, but a supposed person," and that paradoxically he exposes himself most by not talking about himself at all. The final result, nevertheless, is shameless self-exposure. Why anyone should need or desire this is another matter; it is apparently a principal aspect of the very special kind of self-discovery of which so many writers speak. It is a way of saying, "I'm alive."

In the essential terms of the transaction, the writer gets all he is entitled to through the writing itself. Of course he wants to be heard; he wants to be read in twenty languages; he wants to be translated to the screen and even, hopefully in good taste and full production without commercials, to the idiot box. He anticipates the shrewd judgment of the Pulitzer jury and the deliberate wisdom of the Nobel committee. He dreams of glory in the fashion of a sales manager or a would-be dean. But all this is impertinence, and anything beyond the means of continuing to write is frivolity, often in the form of luxuries which, so far as he is an artist, he cannot afford because they cost him time.

There is a final paradox which is scarcely understandable short of the experience of it. The very intensity of the private and imaginative life which goes into the work guarantees absolutely that once the work is completed the writer will be rid of it. He can recover it—although many writers choose not to—by reading his work later. Until he has done so he is likely to be blank to the questions his readers put to him, for they will know his books better than he, and until his characters are named to him he may scarcely remember who they are. But this, too, is a paradoxical advantage, for the joys and triumphs of life are slow prompters to artistic creation and into any work are most likely to go the hurts, the angers, and the rankling injustices which have never been set right. Creativity gives the artist a means of dealing with them, it intensifies his life as he uses them. it frees him by ridding him of them forever, and it thus opens him to new possibilities. And that is the greatest of his privileges.

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